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PHL 405.01: Later Wittgenstein

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Philosophy 405
Prof. Paul Muench (pronounced "Minch")

University of Montana
Spring 2014

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Later Wittgenstein

Tuesday/Thursday, 12:40-2 p.m., LA 146

When Wittgenstein returned to philosophy in the early 1930s, he declared that "a method had been found." There is little agreement, however, about what this method is or how it differs from Wittgenstein's earlier manner of doing philosophy (in the *Tractatus*). In this course we will seek to shed light on this topic through a careful and close (line-by-line) reading of Wittgenstein's later masterpiece, the *Philosophical Investigations*. In the process, we will have occasion to touch on a range of different philosophical topics, including issues in philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of action.

Course Requirements

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1. Attendance/Participation | 10% |
| 2. Paper #1 | 30% |
| 3. Paper #2 | 30% |
| 4. Take-Home Final Exam | 30% |

Readings

Required Book

This book is required and can be purchased at the UM bookstore (it may also be worth checking the prices at www.amazon.com or www.bookfinder.com).

1. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Wiley-Blackwell; ISBN 978-1405159289)

Additional Required Readings

PDFs of additional individual readings will be made available on Moodle.

Moodle

This course has a Moodle page (<http://umonline.umd.edu>). For more information on how to access Moodle, go to http://umonline.umd.edu/student/moodle_help.php.

Email

Any email that I send to the class will be sent to your university email address via Moodle.

Accommodation for Disabilities

Whenever possible, and in accordance with civil rights laws, the University of Montana will attempt to provide reasonable modifications to courses for students with disabilities who request and require them. Please feel free to set up a time with me to discuss any modifications to this course you may require. For more information, contact Disability

Services for Students (<http://life.umt.edu/dss/>), located in the Lommasson Center, room 154.

Attendance and Participation

Your attendance and participation are crucial for the success of this class and will play a significant role in determining whether or not our time together proves to be intellectually fulfilling. As many of you probably know, it is a university requirement that you attend all class meetings for courses in which you are enrolled

(<http://www.umt.edu/catalog/acad/acadpolicy/default.html#attendance>). In my experience, students also get the most out of those classes that they regularly attend. In this course I will take attendance. Everyone may miss three classes, no questions asked (and no justifications/explanations required). After that, each absence will reduce your attendance/participation grade by 10% (that is, 1% of your final grade). If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to hand in ahead of time any work that is due and to obtain any new assignments that are handed out.

Participation has many facets and might be compared to citizenship. Those who are good classroom citizens are those who do three things: (i) come to class prepared, having read and thought about the assignment; (ii) take an active role in class discussions, sharing their critical insights and raising questions that help to generate further discussion and reflection; (iii) take an active role in learning the names of and respectfully listening to their fellow classmates, and in helping to foster a learning environment where all feel welcome to participate and respected as fellow inquirers regardless of the extent to which we may or may not happen to agree about a given topic under investigation.

Papers

You will be required to write two papers in this course, each 2100-2800 words in length (about 6-8 pages). Each paper will be worth 30% of your final grade. Late papers will normally be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day that they are late.

Take-Home Final Exam

You will be required to complete a take-home final exam at the end of the term. This will be worth 30% of your final grade.

The Art of Reading

Reading, like writing, is an art that can only be acquired through extensive and intensive practice. In general, you should plan to read each assignment for this course two times before you come to class: (i) read it through once to get a sense of the overall shape of the discussion and what the chief issues and questions seem to be; (ii) read it a second time, going more slowly and with an eye to how the different parts hang together. As Thoreau put it, "To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent, the steady intention almost of the whole life to this object. Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. [...] [T]his only is reading, in a high sense, not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tip-toe to read and devote our most alert and wakeful hours to" ("Reading," *Walden*).

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

I will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty in this course. In addition to being a violation of the University of Montana Student Conduct Code (<http://ordway.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/name/StudentConductCode>), cheating and plagiarizing also harm your fellow students by giving you an unfair advantage, and harm you since you thereby fail to take yourself seriously. While I think it is pretty self-evident what cheating is, people are not always clear about what plagiarism is. To start, plagiarism can be defined as a form of intellectual stealing and cheating. The Latin root means “to kidnap” and vividly captures what is at stake: when you plagiarize you steal someone else’s intellectual child and pretend that you are its true parent. Specific examples of plagiarism include: (i) incorporating material from somewhere else (a book, an article, a website, an encyclopedia entry) without properly documenting this (and thereby giving the true author credit for her or his work); (ii) handing in work that you did not do (e.g., by purchasing a paper on the Internet or downloading text that you simply insert into your own paper or borrowing a paper that another student wrote). In general, the first instance of cheating or plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade (“F”) for the course. Any instance of cheating or plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty is also subject to University sanction. If you have any questions about whether or not something might constitute plagiarism, please feel free to contact me; see also <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/plagiarism>.